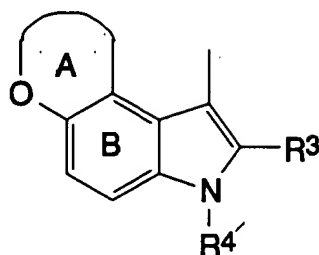
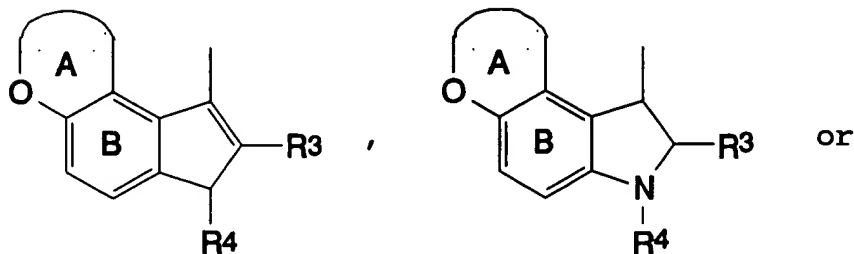
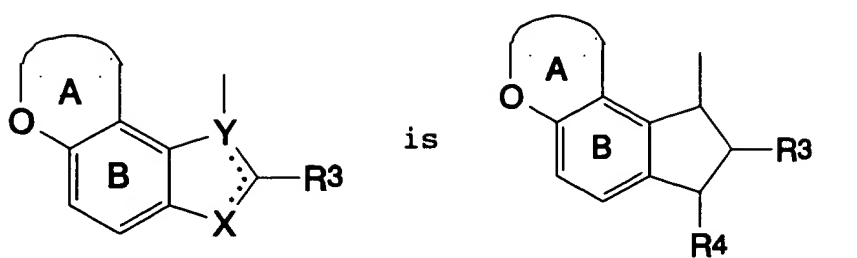


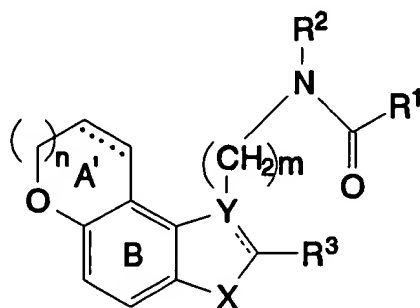
Cont

2650X



wherein R⁴ is an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group
[and the other symbols are as defined in claim 1].

4. (Amended) A compound as claimed in claim 1
which is a compound of the formula:



T2650X

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A'
Contd

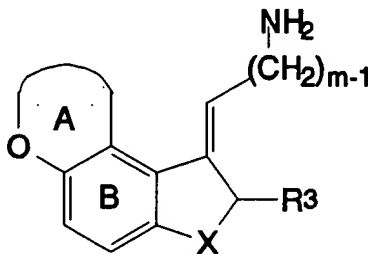
wherein ring A' is an optionally substituted,
oxygen-containing heterocyclic ring;

n is an integer of 0 to 2;

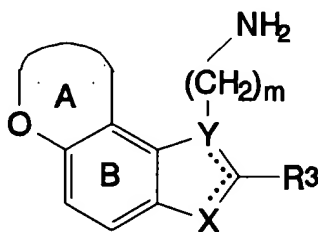
---- and are [the same or different and
each is] independently a single bond or a double bond[;
and the other symbols are as defined in claim 1].

30. (Amended) A process for producing a compound
as claimed in claim 1, which comprises:

reacting a compound of the formula (i):



[wherein all symbols are as defined in claim
1] or a salt thereof, or (ii):



[wherein all symbols are as defined in claim
1,] or a salt thereof, with a compound of the formula:



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Cont

[wherein R¹ is as defined in claim 1,] or a salt [thereof] or a reactive derivative thereof[,]; and

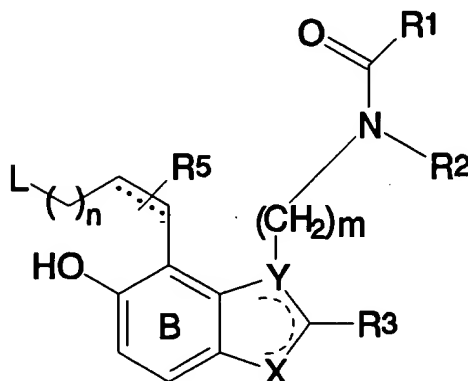
if necessary, subjecting the resultant compound to reduction and/or alkylation.

31. (Amended) A process for producing a compound as claimed in claim 4, which comprises:

subjecting to cyclization a compound of the

formula:

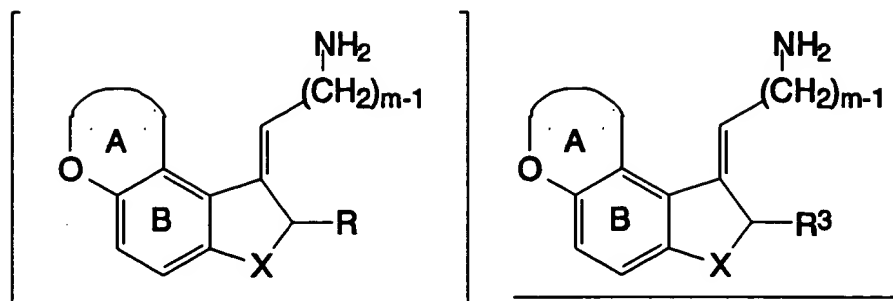
T2670X



wherein R⁵ represents a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, an optionally substituted alkoxy group, a hydroxy group, a nitro group, a cyano group or an optionally substituted amino group; L represents a leaving group[; and the other symbols are as defined in claim 4], or a salt thereof [to cyclization,]; and if necessary, subjecting the resultant compound to reduction.

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32. (Amended) A compound of the formula:



wherein [the symbols are defined in claim 1]

R³ represents a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;

X represents CHR⁴, NR⁴, O or S in which R⁴ represents a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group;

ring A represents an optionally substituted, 5- to 7-membered oxygen-containing heterocyclic ring;

ring B represents an optionally substituted benzene ring; and

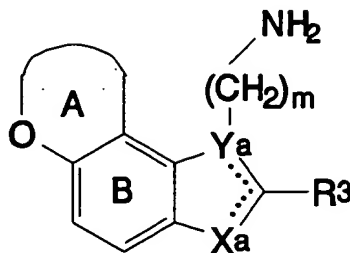
m represents an integer of 1 to 4,

or a salt thereof.

A²
cont

T2690X

33. (Amended) A compound of the formula:



wherein X^a represents CHR^{4a} , NR^{4a} , O or S in which R^{4a} represents a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group;

Y^a represents C, CH or N, provided that when X^a is NH or NCH_3 , Y^a is CH or N; [and the other symbols are as defined in claim 1]

..... represents a single bond or a double bond;

R^3 represents a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group, or an optionally substituted heterocyclic group;

ring A represents an optionally substituted, 5- to 7-membered oxygen-containing heterocyclic ring;

ring B represents an optionally substituted benzene ring; and

m represents an integer of 1 to 4,
or a salt thereof.

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A²
Cont

34. (Amended) A pharmaceutical composition which comprises a compound as claimed in claim 1 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

35. (Amended) A composition as claimed in claim 34 [which] wherein said compound or said pharmaceutically acceptable salt has a binding affinity for melatonin receptor.

³⁷
36. (Amended) A [composition] method as claimed in claim [35] ³⁶~~40~~ which [is a regulating agent of] regulates circadian rhythm.

³⁸
37. (Amended) A [composition] method as claimed in claim [35] ³⁶~~40~~ which [is a regulating agent of] regulates sleep-awake rhythm.

³⁹
38. (Amended) A [composition] method as claimed in claim [35] ³⁶~~40~~ which [is a regulating agent of] regulates time zone change syndrome.

⁴⁰
39. (Amended) A [composition] method as claimed in claim [35] ³⁶~~40~~ which [is a therapeutic agent of] treats or prevents sleep disorders.